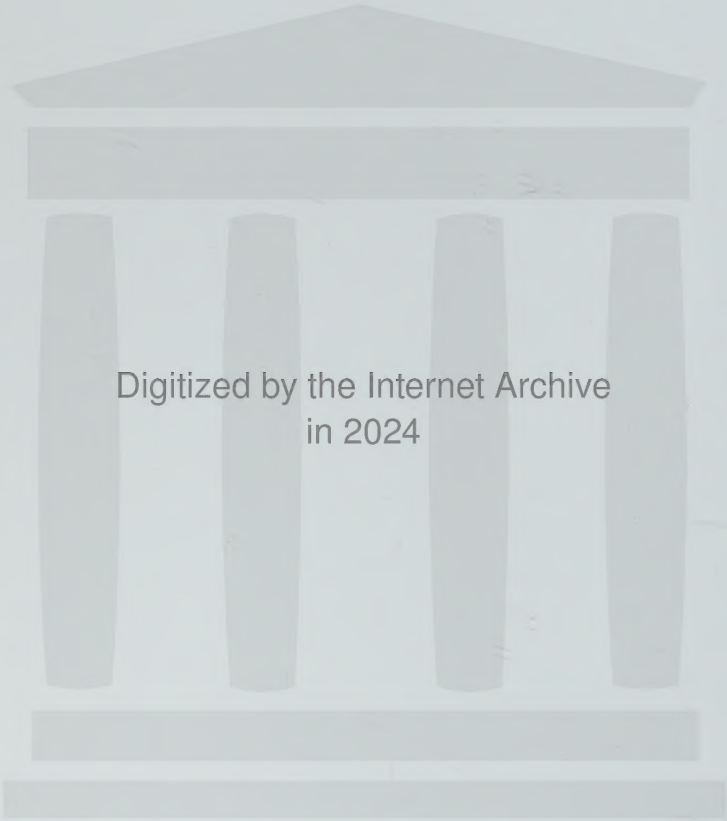
The Secret in The Lighthouse

William Whittom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William R. Whittom

AN ORGINAL HEART SERIES

THE SECRET IN THE LIGHTHOUSE

"Once upon a time in a snow globe..."

William Whittom

THE SECRET IN THE LIGHTHOUSE

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This is a book about what happens when the anger of a mother causes magical interference within a marriage.

This story was created by my mother,

Rose Whittom

Before she passed on, she asked that it be written and made into a book. With the help of my sister Phyllis, we completed her wishes. She passed before she was able to see it in print. She had asked that it be dedicated to our brother, Charles.

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THE SECRET IN THE LIGHTHOUSE

CHAPTER 1

Looking up from his newspaper Hawk Silverbird; saw the sky turning dark. Lightning flashed and thunder cracked and the clouds were swiftly drifting by. Getting up from his easy chair he went outside. The wind was picking up and getting

stronger. The lightning flashed again and Hawk's collie barked.

"Well old boy it looks like a bad storm is brewing," said Hawk as he patted the dog's head. Looking out over the water he said, "Looks like a fishing boat is coming our way. We'd better turn the searchlight on in the lighthouse." About that time it started to rain.

"Come Toby we must hurry," he exclaimed! As he turned back toward the lighthouse, more lightning flashed and then they heard a cracking sound. Looking up Hawk saw a tree had been hit and was falling toward him. It came down so fast he didn't have time to move. "Oh my leg," he screamed, in great pain as the tree fell across his right leg pinning him underneath.

Hearing him scream, a young woman came running out of the lighthouse. "Hawk, Hawk!" she yelled, running to him. "Are you alright," then she saw him under the tree?

"My leg is pinned," he answered with a moan. "I can't move and the searchlight needs to be turned on. A boat is coming in!"

"A boat," she questioned, looking out over the water? She could see the big fishing boat being tossed around in the raging sea.

"We have to get this tree off," she yelled over the storm as she tried to move it, but the tree wouldn't move as she was not strong enough.

"The boat is getting closer. Those lights have to come on and the fog horn too," he said. Then looking at Toby his collie, "Toby you know how to turn them on, run boy you have to hurry. You can do it. Turn on the lights and horn. That's a good boy," he said as Toby turned and ran to the lighthouse. A moment later the bright light came on and the foghorn could be heard.

"He did it Hawk, he did it," exclaimed the woman, excitedly as she kneeled down next to him!

"Yes and just in time," he replied. "That boat could've come across the five feet of sand and hit the rock embankment." Hawk then noticed she was cold and wet. "Starlit Rose, you're freezing and all wet, go inside." It was still early spring and though the days were warm, the rain was cold.

"Please darling, go inside," he said gently, as he pushed some hair from her face. "Go in and make some coffee for when the fishermen get here. They can help me and we'll be in. By this time Toby was back. "Good boy Toby," Hawk said as he patted the dog that was also soaking wet. Toby barked happily as he wagged his tail.

Coming up the steps from the dock below, the boat Captain bellowed, "That light came on just in time. For a minute I thought we were going to crash." Seeing Hawk lying on the ground, he hurried to his side. "Hawk Silverbird what is the meaning of this?" He roared, as he put his hands on his hips. "Why are you lying on the ground in this storm? You should be inside." Then helping Starlit Rose to her feet, he said, "You're freezing girl! Go inside."

Starlit Rose looked at him. He was a big man, wearing a long black raincoat and a wide brimmed fisherman's hat. He had a white beard and mustache. He might have been in his late fifties.

His wife Susan had blonde hair and was wearing a red hooded raincoat. Following her were six men. She later found out their names were, Owen, Billy, John, Jack, Ben, and Seal.

"Captain Fisher," yelled Hawk! "Captain Fisher," he yelled again! It was raining so hard by then it was hard to hear anything. "The tree is on my leg. I can't get up."

"Well, why didn't you say so, my boy?" "Men," the captain said to the fishermen. "Let's move this tree and get everyone inside, before we all get sick." As the men grabbed onto the tree, the captain's wife took Starlit Rose gently by the arm and said, "Let's go inside and fix some hot coffee. The men will bring Hawk in". As the women entered the lighthouse, Susan Fisher said, "I'll put on the coffee while you get out of those wet clothes." She then hung up her raincoat by the front door and went into the kitchen.

As Starlit Rose was coming out of the bedroom the fishermen were carrying Hawk inside.

"Sit him over there," said Captain Fisher. "Put him in that recliner and I'll check his leg."

"It's broken," he exclaimed! "Billy, bring me my medical bag so I can set and put a cast on it".

"Yes Doctor," said Billy with a grin and a salute.

"Doctor," questioned Hawk looking at him? "I didn't know you were a Dr."

"Yes, I'm a M.D. but I own a fishing boat and fishing is more fun." Whispering he said, "With this crew someone needs to be a Dr." After the leg was set and a cast had been added; everyone had a cup of coffee and sandwiches that the women had fixed.

Starlit Rose sat next to Hawk and Toby lay at his feet. The storm had been getting louder and the wind stronger. They could hear the wind whistle through the trees. The waves were higher now too. They could hear the water smack hard against the rocks.

The women looked out into the night. It was really dark now, and when the lightning flashed they could see the rain pouring down and the tree tops blowing in the wind. Two hours had passed and everyone was warm and dry.

"It's five pm now so all we can do is wait out the storm. I hope the boat will be ok," said Captain Fisher.

"I'm sure it will be fine Sir," replied John.

"We will have a look in the morning," said Ben.

The women poured more coffee and sat down again.

"It sure is good to see you again my boy," said Captain Fisher to Hawk.

"It's good to see you too Sir," replied Hawk.

"It's been what, three years?" "I guess I was the last boat to leave when they closed down the lighthouse," said Captain Fisher.

"I remember," said Hawk thinking back. "If I remember right, I was coming out of the store with a cola; my mind was elsewhere when I ran into you and we both fell."

"That's right," agreed the Captain. "I told you, you need to watch where you were going, and you said you were sorry. We went into the store and you bought me a cola. I still want to know how you kept from spilling yours." Laughing the Captain said, "To think of it not only was I the last boat to leave, but now it seems I'm the first boat to return since it's reopening".

"You're right about that," laughed Hawk.

"What is it about this place," asked Susan? "I can feel something so odd, I can feel happy times yet there is sadness too. Something bad happened here. I had heard this place was almost abandoned, but does anyone know the story?"

All was quiet while Starlit Rose and Hawk looked at each other then everyone looked at them.

"Alright, what gives," asked Susan looking at them? "You two do know something."

CHAPTER 2

"Well," said Hawk as he took Starlit Rose's hand. "It all started when we were kids. This old lighthouse use to be a very busy place. Big fishing boats and other boats were always coming in. The searchlight shown for miles around and this lighthouse was a very popular place. It used to be a small store and café. Sleeping rooms were upstairs and the caretaker had an apartment in back. There is a staircase going upstairs to the watch tower and searchlight. There is also a duck pond with cattails and wildflowers out back. It's called The Duck Pond because there really are ducks there. Also a lot of butterflies hang around the duck pond. Most of it is still the same except part of the store is now our living room. We moved the wall over a bit. The café and store are on the other side. We enlarged the kitchen, and of course we still have cola. This is

where Starlit Rose and I first met," Hawk smiled remembering the old days.

"What happened then," asked Susan, taking in every word?

"It was a warm summer day. I was out walking and decided to stop here for a cola," replied Hawk. "That's when I saw her. She was the prettiest girl I had ever seen. She was eight years old, had long blonde hair and wearing a blue dress long enough to almost drag the ground. Her dress and eyes seem to match. She had a golden tan that showed off the color in her lips. I fell in love. She was just breath taking."

"What was she doing there," asked Captain Fisher as he leaned forward listening with interest?

"She was just standing there watching the boats come in. The wind was blowing through her hair. The prettiest site you ever saw," answered Hawk with a smile.

Starlit Rose looked at Hawk with love in her eyes remembering when she had seen him for the first time. He had long black hair and darker skin typical of the natives here. She thought he was just so cute and loved spending time with him. He was so

nice to her and it made her feel proud just to know him.

"We stood there for the longest time and watched the boats, after that we got together every day," said Hawk. We either went fishing or walked across the sand. We loved putting our feet in the water. Sometimes we even collected shells. I was about 9 then and when school started we walked together. Mostly though we just watched the boats come in. Then of course there was the duck pond, we loved it there and soon it became our favorite place."

"A surprise party was given by her mother on her sixteenth birthday and that's when everything changed. Our friends from school were invited and there was a new boy. He was a stranger and I asked Starlit Rose who he was?"

"She told me she didn't know him either," said Hawk.

"About that time her mother came over and we found out who he was and why he was there."

"Starlit Rose, this is Ed Quail," said Starlit Roses' mother smiling with her arm across his shoulder.

"He is your future husband and I think it's time you two got to know each other."

"He's my what?" Starlit Rose exclaimed as she looked at her mother.

"Your future husband," said her mother, Annabelle Finn. "When you turn eighteen, you and Ed will be married, it's all arranged. Ed's family has a lot of money and he can provide you with all the good things in life. His father owns a chain of stores. I want you to marry into a rich family and have someone that can provide for you. I want you to be a lady with fancy dresses and jewelry, never having to want for anything."

"Wanting the best for me is all well and good Mother, but I already have someone," said Starlit Rose as she wrapped her arms around Hawk's arm and said, "I'm going to marry Hawk someday."

"You're what!" Annabelle screech. "You will do no such thing! You and Ed will be married and that's final! What can a boy, like Hawk give you? Nothing! His family doesn't have any money. They can't give you what Ed can."

"He can give me love mother! Without that you have nothing." Starlit Rose hissed.

"What would you know about love? You're just a child!" Annabelle snapped.

"More than you do apparently," Starlit Rose said looking at her mother angrily.

Grabbing Starlit Rose by the arm her mother said, "Come dear, it's your birthday. We can talk about this later. We shouldn't keep your guests waiting." Looking back at Hawk she said, "You're welcome to stay for the party but I think it's best if you don't come around anymore. She needs to get to know Ed." She then put her arms around Starlit Rose and Ed and walked away.

Chapter 3

"Hawk," exclaimed Starlit Rose as she went up to him. "Where have you been? I've been looking for you everywhere."

"Sitting here mostly," he replied as he looked up from where he was sitting beside the lighthouse. "How have you been," he asked?

"I'm fine, but I have missed you," she said as she sat down beside him, "Are you ok?"

"Sure, why wouldn't I be," he answered looking back at the sea?

"Well, I haven't seen you since the party three weeks ago," Starlit Rose said sadly as she too looked out across the sea. "You didn't even stay for the party. It would have been much better if mother hadn't of done what she did. I wish you would have stayed."

"How's Quail," Hawk asked?

"Quail, you mean Ed Quail," she asked?

"Yes," he answered back.

"Alright I guess," She replied, "I try to avoid him. He might be rich and he may be nice but I won't marry him. I still love you." She then looked at Hawk and put her hand on his arm. "Don't you love me anymore?"

"Sure I do Starlit Rose, but I don't have anything. I'm not rich. I can't buy you all those nice things you're used to having; like all the things your parents and Ed can give you," Hawk said sadly.

"I don't care about those things," Starlit Rose said as she laid her head on his shoulder. "I just want to be loved by you. I know we're still young, but I want to marry you. Who knows when we grow up we might be rich too. If not your love is all I need, or ever will need. You make me happy and don't forget it."

"Now I remember why I love you so much," Hawk smiled as he pulled her closer to him. Taking her in his arms he kissed her, "You make me happy too."

Standing up, he pulled her to her feet. "Come, let's go get a cola and walk down by the duck pond

and walk through the wild flowers. It's such a beautiful day."

"Yes, a very good day," she replied happily.

The next day, Ed Quail saw Starlit Rose and as he came up behind her he said, "Hello, I haven't seen you around lately. Where have you been?"

"Around," she answered.

Then Ed quail grinned, "I saw you at the lighthouse yesterday, talking to Silverbird."

She whirled around and looked at him.

"Don't worry," Ed said still grinning, "I'm not going to tell your mother. To tell you the truth, I like your Silverbird; I think you two make a good couple."

"What," Starlit Rose asked looking at him?

"I said, I like your Silverbird," he said again. "He's a nice guy; I think I would like to get to know him better. Can you and he come to my house for dinner tomorrow night? Mom can fix some fried chicken and stuff. She is a good cook."

"I'll ask him," Starlit Rose answered.

"Good, I'll see you both tomorrow at Seven o'clock." Then Ed turned and walked away. At seven sharp the next evening, Hawk and Starlit Rose arrived at a big beautiful home.

"You are right on time," said Ed with a smile as he opened the door. "Dinner is ready." Walking into the dining room, Ed said, "This is my mother Emma and my father Joe."

"Hello," said Hawk with a smile as he shook Joe's hand.

"It's nice to meet you," Joe replied. "I've heard a lot of nice things about you. Ed talks about you two, often. I hear the young lady is to marry my son, according to Annabelle."

Seeing the look on Starlit Rose's face, Emma put her arm around her. "Don't worry child," she grinned with a chuckle, "We all know about you and Hawk. "See those two girls over there? The one in the pink dress is Peaches. She is the one Ed has eyes for. He loves her just like you do Hawk. The other girl is Ed's sister, Jill."

"Come, sit and let's eat," smiled Joe with a big grin.

"Dinner was good and everyone was very nice. Ed had his girl and I had mine," said Hawk.

"What happened then," asked Captain Fisher?

"The Four of us became the best of friends," answered Hawk as he went on with the story. "We loved getting a cola from the lighthouse, and taking long walks down at the duck pond. Annabelle saw us together a few times, but thought I was with Peaches and Ed was with Starlit Rose. Sometimes Jill would even go with us. She was a couple years younger, but we all had fun being together. Just after graduation in a mass ceremony the four of us and a few other couples were all married. Ed and I had graduated the year before. All of our parents were there and we all were so happy, it was a wonderful day."

A few days later Starlit Rose's dad said, "Hello Honey," as he went up to her. She was watching a big boat come in. "I'm happy for you. You married a good man. Hawk loves you, I can tell. He will make you a good husband."

Starlit Rose looked at him and asked, "How did you know?"

"How did I know you married Hawk and not Ed? I was there, remember. I saw you two get married. Just because everyone stood in a circle and held hands doesn't mean I couldn't tell who married whom. You married Hawk and Ed married Peaches. She is a lovely girl and will make Ed a good wife. I knew about you four all along. I saw the way you all looked at each other. I could tell who was with whom. I love you and I think you made the right choice. Hawk has a good head on his shoulders and I think he will make something of himself one day. He will have plenty of money but right now everyone is fresh out of school, it takes time to earn big bucks. You will make it just fine. Besides your mother will come around one day, when she realizes how much you really love each other. You belong together," he said with a smile as he hugged his daughter.

"Thanks Dad," Starlit Rose said as she kissed her father's cheek.

Chapter 4

"The next few months found us very happy," smiled Hawk, as he looked at Starlit Rose and kissed her hand.

While Susan Fisher filled Hawk's coffee cup he continued, "The four of us moved behind the Quail Home. Of course the lighthouse was still our favorite place to go. Then one day we all went to get a cola and watch the boats come in. Starlit Rose's mother walked in and caught me kissing Starlit Rose. She was so angry, she started yelling. Starlit Rose's dad tried to calm her down and get her to leave the lighthouse but the next thing anyone knew, she was throwing out her hand and yelled, "I cast this spell of magic dust on you, into the snow globe you will go, 'til love comes true and the rain will set you free." The dust didn't fall on me, it fell on Starlit Rose. Her mother was standing there with a snow globe in her hand. Starlit Rose was inside yelling, "Let me out, let me out!"

Annabelle looked at her and then at me and yelled. "Now see what you've done! My poor Starlit Rose; It's your entire fault, Hawk Silverbird! I told you to stay away from her."

"I didn't do anything," Hawk yelled back! "All I ever did was to love her. You Annabelle Finn did this! Give me the globe," he then stated, trying to sound calmer as he held out his hand.

"No!" she yelled back as she held the globe close to her. "I'm sorry my darling," she whispered, as she moved her hand over the top of the globe, freezing her in time.

"Annabelle! What have you done," screamed her husband? "Get her out of there."

"I can't," Annabelle said sadly as she realized what she had done. Holding the snow globe tight she started to cry.

"Everyone around her walked quietly out of the lighthouse," said Hawk, remembering the days past. "The area seemed to wither and die. Soon after that people moved away, the boats stopped coming in and the lighthouse shut down. Even I left town soon after. We all had searched to find where Annabelle had hid the globe but it wasn't to be

found. Annabelle wouldn't tell anyone where she hid it. She wanted Starlit Rose back but didn't want me to have her, so hiding her was her only way to keep us apart. It seemed as if the town was going in slow motion. Nothing was the same. The town spark was gone, Lighthouse Villa was dead."

Chapter 5

"How awful!" exclaimed Seal, listening to Hawk's every word.

"Ed and I tried to keep in touch," continued Hawk. "We were still the best of friends but I had moved to the city and he stayed here, then one day he called me."

The call went something like this:

"Hello,"

"Hello Hawk its Ed, how are you?"

"I'm fine," replied Hawk.

"That's good; hey I received a call from Mr. Finn yesterday. He said he and Mrs. Finn needed to see you right away; said it was really important."

"Do you know what it is all about," asked Hawk?

"The only thing I know is, it is about Starlit Rose. Mr. Finn said you need to hurry. Mrs. Finn won't

tell anyone but you. She is sick so maybe she will tell you where Starlit Rose is. No one has found that globe even after all this time. Hawk your mother-in-law has changed a lot since that day. She is quieter and a lot nicer now. She is helping people instead of making trouble. I think she is feeling bad about what she did to you and Starlit Rose, and the years that have been lost to everyone. She can't change time back but maybe she will give Starlit Rose back."

"It would be nice to see Starlit Rose again," said Hawk sadly.

"Should I tell them you are coming then?"

"Yes. I'll be there tomorrow." answered Hawk.

As Hawk hung up the phone he brushed the tears from his eyes. "It would be wonderful to see my wife again. I hope that is what she wants," he said out loud to himself.

Hawk went into the bedroom and started packing some things. After that he went to the restaurant down the street for a bite to eat. He would leave early in the morning.

As Hawk drove into his home town he saw the sign that read: Lighthouse villa pop. 118

At least there were a handful of people who stayed but not like it was a few years ago when there were over one thousand.

It was still clean and beautiful as always, but there was stillness; sort of a cold and lonely feeling. It used to be so warm and full of life. The people now walked around as if in a daze.

Seeing Hawk pull up in front of his house Mr. Finn ran to meet him. Hugging him he said, "I'm so glad you came. It's so good to see you again son. It's been a long time." He led Hawk inside to a bedroom at the other end of the hall. Hawk's beautiful brown and white collie, Toby, lay on the porch waiting for his master to return.

"Hawk!" said Annabelle Finn, as she held out her hand for him to take. Taking her hand in his, she said, "I have learned so much these past years. If only I knew then what I do now. I'm really sorry for all the trouble I have caused you and Starlit Rose. Only you can bring her back. I guess I knew all along your love was true. I just wanted a better life for her, yet I was the one that took it all away. I was a fool and selfish. I never meant to hurt her. It was you I was after. You're a good man; I should've let you two be. Helping both of you get started would have been better than taking her away.

Because of that, this whole town has suffered. I was angry and not thinking straight. If I had of given you the globe when you asked for it, the glass would have broken."

There were tears streaming down Hawks face while he was listening to Annabelle talk.

"This town has never been the same," she said. "It lost its glow, its spirit and it was my entire fault. Go to the lighthouse Hawk. It has closed but that is where you will find her."

A little while later, Hawk pulled in front of the lighthouse. Getting out of his car he and Toby went inside to look around. The only thing Hawk saw was a torn curtain, a broken chair and a lot of spider webs. "What do you think Toby? Should we buy it? With a little cleaning she will be as good as new," said Hawk to his collie as he started looking around.

"I heard you were here," said a voice behind Hawk.

Turning around Hawk saw his old friend.

"Ed," he exclaimed! "It's so good to see you my friend. How is Peaches?"

"She's fine," answered Ed Quail. "Did I tell you we have a two year old daughter? She looks just like her mother."

"No, you didn't; but I'm happy for you," said Hawk.

"Did I hear you right, are you thinking about buying this old place? That would be wonderful."

"What did Annabelle want? Did you see her yet," asked Ed?

"Yes, I'm thinking about buying this old lighthouse and moving back," laughed Hawk. "Yes, I did see Annabelle. She told me she was sorry for all the trouble she caused and that Starlit Rose was somewhere in the lighthouse."

"Here, in this lighthouse," exclaimed Ed! "Where?"

"I don't know, but I plan to search every inch of this place as I remodel it. I've looked some already but came up empty."

"Well, who is this," Ed asked as he noticed the dog by the window?

"That's my pal Toby," said Hawk as the dog came up to them.

"He sure is a beautiful collie," said Ed as he patted the dog's head.

"Well," said Hawk, looking around. "I think I'll find out who owns this place and see if I can buy it."

"Good luck," grinned Ed as they walked out of the lighthouse. "When you finish here come by the house for lunch. It should be ready by then, besides I'm sure Peaches would love to see you and I want you to meet our daughter."

"I would love to," answered Hawk, "See you in a bit." He then waved to Ed as he drove away.

About an hour later:

"Hawk Silverbird," exclaimed Peaches as she hugged him! "It's so wonderful to see you. It's been a long time. Please come in and sit. Lunch is ready."

"Thank you for the invite," smiled Hawk as he went into the dining room.

"You are most welcome," said Ed. "Hawk, this is our little girl Rosebud."

"It's a pleasure to meet you," said Hawk as he kissed her little hand.

Rosebud giggled.

Sitting down to eat, Ed asked, "Did you get it?"

"Yes," Hawk said as he smiled a big smile. "I've started the paperwork but already have the keys. The lighthouse is mine. Tomorrow I will start fixing it up. Today I will make some arrangements. I have a lot of places to go, people to see and things to buy. When I get finished, I will go home and get my things and move here."

"Sounds like you have a very busy day planned," said Peaches with a smile as she passed the food around.

"Indeed I do," exclaimed Hawk excitedly! Reaching for the potatoes he said, "I also want to look for that snow globe."

"Snow globe," questioned Peaches, as she looked at him with a wondering look on her face?

"Snow globe," repeated Hawk looking at her. "Starlit Rose; she's in the lighthouse!"

"Wow," exclaimed Peaches!

"The next day Toby and I went back to the lighthouse," said Hawk, as Susan Fisher gave him another sandwich. "I took down the torn curtains

and threw them and the broken chair away. I then cleaned all the spider webs and started sweeping the floor. I heard Toby bark. He was standing there under the window looking at something in the dark."

"What is it boy? What's up," Hawk asked? Then taking a closer look he saw the snow globe.

"The snow globe," he exclaimed excitedly! "Toby, it's the snow globe!" he said again as he picked it up.

"Hawk, Hawk! Is that you," cried a voice?

Dropping the broom he took his shirt tail and wiped some dust off the globe. There stood Starlit Rose. In his excitement he dropped the globe. Glass went everywhere. Starlit Rose appeared in front of him. He then stumbled over the broom and fell to the floor. She laughed and kneeled down next to him. Reaching out, she touched his face.

"Hawk," she whispered, "Hawk, are you alright?"

"Starlit! Starlit Rose is it really you?"

Before she could answer, he grabbed her and held her close. Holding her so tightly, she thought he would break her.

Getting up he pulled her to her feet, touching her face he brushed the hair from her eyes; looking at her he said, "I thought I lost you forever." Taking her into his arms he held her for the longest time. "I've missed you so much," he said with tears of joy.

Taking his face in her hands she said, "Let me look at you." Touching his cheek she said with a sad look, "You look older. How long has it been?"

"Three years," he answered.

"Three years," she exclaimed! "Three years," tears were now streaming down her beautiful young face.

Wiping away her tears, Hawk said, "Don't cry my darling." Then he held her close to his chest laying his head on hers.

Chapter 6

Toby barked at the young lovers. They seemed to have forgotten about him, lost in a world of their own. Starlit Rose and Hawk looked at him. He barked again. They laughed.

"You think we forgot about you boy?" Hawk laughed again, as he started picking at his beloved pet.

After playing with him for a minute he said, "Well Toby ol' pal, I think I'd better clean this glass up." Hawk then picked up the broom and started sweeping up the broken snow globe.

"What have you been doing for the last three years," Starlit Rose asked, as she stood there watching him?

"Working for a newspaper," he answered. "After your mother froze you in that awful globe, I tried to get it. Your father begged her to let you go. She just hung onto it and cried. She blamed me; saying it was my fault that you were in there. What was it she said, I cast this spell...?"

"...Of magic dust on you into the snow globe you will go. There you will stay 'til love comes true and

the rain will set you free." Starlit Rose finished the sentence being deep in thought.

Then looking at Hawk she exclaimed, "Hawk, mother couldn't give you the globe. If she did it would have broken. You would've had me back again. She knew that too. She knew our love was strong. What I don't understand is what it means about the rain?" Then Starlit Rose continued, "What happened then?"

"Everyone left the lighthouse. It closed soon after that. I didn't know what to do. I was lost without you. No one knew what Annabelle had done with you. We looked everywhere. Your father even begged her to tell him. She wouldn't. After a year past and you couldn't be found, I left Lighthouse Villa and moved to the city. I got a job as a reporter for the newspaper. Ed and I have kept in touch. He said he would let me know if he ever found you. Then the other day he called and said your mother wanted to see me. So I packed a bag and came back. She told me she was sorry for what she had done. She told me you were here in the lighthouse, but didn't say where. Toby and I came here to search again. I decided to buy the lighthouse and move back. In cleaning we found you so now I have you back. We will have a lovely

home after we finish remodeling and with the money I have saved I can keep you in those pretty dresses and fine jewelry your mother was so worried about," he grinned.

"Oh Hawk," she laughed as she hugged him. "Your love is the only thing I ever wanted. I love you so much."

"I love you too Hon," he said as he kissed her. "There is something else I need to tell you about your mother. She has changed a lot since you last seen her. She is a lot nicer now. She has started helping people, but she is ill. That's why she wanted to see me. She knows that I am the only one that could free you."

"Mother is sick? We must go to her, I need to see her," Starlit Rose said.

"Yes we should go," Hawk said. Then taking her hand he said, "Let's go now."

As they started out the door, Starlit Rose's skin began to hurt. The sun was so bright and her eyes began to water. She started feeling sick and backed into the lighthouse. Wiping her eyes she started out again to only feel sick again.

"I can't go outside," she cried! All she could do was stand and look out the door from the shadows.

"I'm sorry darling," Hawk said. "It must have something to do with that spell."

"The only thing I can do is stay inside until we figure out what it means," Starlit Rose said, as she sat down in the floor to play with Toby.

"He likes you," said Hawk, as he too started playing with the collie.

"Well I thought I heard voices," said Ed as he came into the lighthouse. "Who's the young lady?"

As Hawk and Starlit Rose turned around he exclaimed, "Starlit Rose!" Then as they got to their feet, Ed gave her a big hug. "It's so good to see you girl."

They told Ed Quail how she was found and that until they found what the rest of the spell meant she couldn't go outside.

"What about Annabelle," asked Ed? "She was the one that cast that awful spell; surely she knows what it means."

"Let's call her," replied Ed. "Here you can use my cell phone," smiled Ed.

"Sorry Hawk," Annabelle Finn said sadly, "If I tell you, the spell won't work. You have to figure it out for yourself. I hope you do soon so I can see my daughter again. I can tell you this much, once you understand what rain means the spell will completely be broken. And Hawk?"

"Yes Annabelle?"

"I'm glad she's back."

Hanging up the phone, Hawk told them what she had said then handed the cell phone back to Ed.

"Well at least you tried," said Starlit Rose as she put her arms around one of Hawks. Then she laid her head on his arm and took a deep breath.

Chapter 7

"Hello," said a man sticking his head in the door. "Hawk, I'm here to fix the searchlight and the carpenters are here too."

"Good, then let's get started," said Hawk as he kissed Starlit Rose and headed for the door. "Are you coming Ed?"

"I'm on my way," answered Ed, with a wink and a grin at Starlit Rose, as he too went out the door.

Starlit Rose could hear everyone working. People were hammering and talking as they worked. She was back and now the town was once again becoming lively. She could even smell the fresh paint.

Toby would play with her awhile then go outside. He was keeping his eye on everyone and everything. Toby would run and bark, trying to get in on everything. He even got some blue paint on his nose.

Starlit Rose laughed when she saw it, "Toby," and then she laughed again. "You look funny. You shouldn't be sticking your nose in everything."

Toby just looked at her and barked. He didn't care. He was having fun.

"Hello, anyone home," asked Peaches as she entered in the lighthouse? "Starlit Rose," she exclaimed! "You look wonderful. Ed told me you were back. I brought a table and some chairs. I also brought some lunch," she said as she sat the things down. Then giving her a hug she said "I sure did miss you. I'm so glad you're back."

"I missed everyone too," replied Starlit Rose. "But for me it was just like it happened over night. It is good to be back though. I'll enjoy it better when the spell is all broken and I can go outside again."

"Me too, but in the mean time I'll help you," said Peaches. "Just tell me what you want for the house and what color and I'll see if I can find it. I'll do the shopping for you, if that's ok?"

"I couldn't think of a better person to do my shopping," smiled Starlit Rose. "It will be fun."

"Sure it will, but it would be more fun if you could go along," said Peaches.

"Don't worry about it Peaches," replied Starlit Rose. "I'm sure we will have lots of other times we can go shopping."

Starlit Rose then saw Rosebud come in with Toby following behind her. He had gone outside when Peaches had come in.

"Who is this pretty lady," asked Starlit Rose?

"This is my daughter, Rosebud," answered Peaches as she put her arm around the little girl.

"She looks just like you," Starlit Rose said.

"That's what Ed says," laughed Peaches.

"Mommy, mommy," said Rosebud as she tugged on Peaches dress. "Are we going to eat or are you going to talk all day?"

Peaches and Starlit Rose looked at the little girl, then at each other; they started to laugh.

"Well," said Starlit Rose to Peaches, "I guess she told you, but then she is right. Remember I missed 3 years of eating."

Peaches looked at Starlit Rose and said, "To think about it you are right, here sit," she said as she pulled out a chair for Starlit Rose to sit in.

Rosebud climbed in another chair and picked up a piece of chicken with her little fingers and said, "Here Star Rosie eat, its good."

"Thank you Darlin'," then she took a bite while Rosebud watched. "Very good, smiled Starlit Rose."

They had fried chicken, potato salad, green beans, and ice tea.

After they finished, Rosebud went to play with Toby while the women sat at the table with pen and paper writing down the things to buy for the lighthouse. Before they knew it the day had passed and the workers were leaving.

"Peaches are you ready to go," asked Ed holding Rosebud? "It looks like this little one is ready for bed. She is so sleepy; she can't keep her eyes open. She and Toby have had a very busy day."

Hawk laughed, "Look at Toby. He looks like he is about asleep too."

Toby was lying just inside the door, too tired to go any farther.

"Yes I'm ready," answered Peaches. Then she said to Starlit Rose, "I'll go shopping tomorrow and see what I can find."

"Thank you," said Starlit Rose as she hugged her friend, "See you tomorrow."

Hawk said, "Have them bill me for anything you pick up for us."

"Ok," replied Peaches. "Goodnight," she said as they left.

"Well it's just you and me now," said Hawk as he hugged Starlit Rose. "Since you can't leave the lighthouse, I'll get some blankets and things from the car and we can sleep on the floor tonight. Tomorrow I'll get us a bed; at least we have lights and water."

Then he kissed her and was out the door. They had leftovers for dinner. It tasted very good to Starlit Rose. About an hour later she was curled up in his arms fast asleep.

Chapter 8

Waking up early the next morning, Starlit Rose could hear the birds singing. They sounded so beautiful. It was always one of her favorite sounds. She lay there and listened for a while. Looking at her sleeping husband, she ran her finger across his cheek and whispered, "It sure is good to be home." Starlit Rose got up and went into the kitchen to fix some breakfast.

A little while later Hawk woke up to the smell of coffee in the air. It smelled great. Smiling to himself, he got up and hurried into the kitchen. Walking up behind Starlit Rose he put his arms around her and then he kissed her cheek. "This is the best morning ever," he said. "Breakfast smells so good."

There were also eggs, toast and bacon sizzling on the stove. After the table was set, Hawk pulled out a chair for Starlit Rose. She looked up at him and smiled, "Thank you," she said.

Breakfast was good and it was great being together again. It was really great being home; back in their favorite place, back with their families.

Over breakfast they talked about how they would fix up the old lighthouse.

After breakfast had been eaten, the carpenters arrived and Ed showed up. There was a lot of work to do. Upon hearing that Starlit Rose was finally found and what all was happening several people from town showed up to offer their assistance. There were painters arriving and some brought their mowers to cut and trim the grass. Flowers needed to be planted so some of the people went to the Villa Greenhouse. The duck pond also needed to be cleaned. There were people everywhere.

Cleaning around the pond Ed found some cattails, "Hey look," he yelled, "I found some cattails and wildflowers."

"Great," Hawk yelled back, as he cut down more weeds.

"Oh, it looks wonderful. So pretty," said Peaches as she stopped by before going into town for house supplies. Rosebud stayed with Starlit Rose and Toby. The painters were painting the outside of the lighthouse. Inside the tower there were wooden floors and a beautiful staircase going up and around. Hawk and Ed stood there and looked at it

for the longest time. At the top of the tower, there was a rail porch going all the way around the searchlight.

"I love it," exclaimed Hawk! "Do you like it," he asked Starlit Rose?

"Yes it's beautiful," she answered.

"I like how the staircase goes up and around and around and around," said Ed still looking up. He couldn't take his eyes off it.

"You would," laughed Hawk.

Starlit Rose put her hands over her mouth and quietly laughed at them both.

"It's beginning to look like the old place again," said Ed as he looked at Hawk.

"That's for sure," replied Hawk. "Everyone has done such a wonderful job getting this place up and running again. The duck pond is all clean and the tower has a fresh coat of paint."

By that time Peaches had returned and with her were Joe and Emma, Ed's Parents.

"Look who I ran into," Peaches said as she entered the lighthouse.

"Grandma," yelled Rosebud excitedly as she ran to Emma Quail!

"Hello," said Starlit Rose as she looked at them.

"Well come here girl," said Joe as he put his arms out to give her a hug.

He then said, "It's so good to see you again. You look beautiful; still as pretty as ever, and welcome home."

"Thank you," she said, "It's good to be home."

After Emma hugged her, she held Starlit Rose at arm's length. "Joe's right, you do look beautiful. It's good to have you back."

Hawk and Ed went outside for a few minutes to speak with the workers before they left for the night. When they came back in Emma and Peaches showed everyone the things they had picked out for the house. Starlit Rose loved all of it. They showed that they had picked out some green and white paint for the bedroom and a lovely bedroom suite; a bed spread and curtains to match. Two lamps and other things needed in a home. Peaches went by the clothing store and had purchased a few dresses, some jeans, a few tops, and a couple pair of shoes.

"I thought you could use these," she said. "You really needed some fresh and new clothes."

"Thanks," smiled Starlit Rose.

"Here dear," said Emma as she too handed Starlit Rose a little box. "Well, open it," she said as Starlit Rose just stood there looking at it.

Upon opening the little box, she found a beautiful necklace and matching earrings. "I love these they are so pretty, thanks," she said as she held the necklace up to her neck.

"Let me help you put it on," said Peaches. "It will look so beautiful on you. Don't you think so Hawk?"

"Yes it does very beautiful," remarked Hawk as he touched the necklace for a closer look.

"Have you all noticed how active this town of ours is, since Starlit Rose returned? Her return seems to have brought back the life to Lighthouse Villa," stated Joe.

"Yes," answered Ed. "It seems our Starlit Rose brings the good out in people. They are all so happy she's back with us. I can't believe how much we got done today."

"Well," said Starlit Rose, "I'll be happy when the total spell is broken and I can once again go outside."

"So does everyone else," said Emma looking at her. "The ladies all want to see you. I think they are planning a big get together for when you're free. I saw your father today and he said he couldn't wait to see you again."

"I want to see him and mama too," said Starlit Rose.

"Well kids," said Emma to Ed and Peaches. "We better go so Hawk and Starlit Rose can get some sleep. We can start again tomorrow." Then taking Joe's arm they left the lighthouse.

"Well Darlin'," said Hawk with a grin as he picked her up and carried her to bed. "Tomorrow we will paint the bedroom but at least we have the bed set up and can sleep comfortable tonight."

"That sounds good," she replied as she gave him a tight hug. They got ready for bed and were soon fast asleep, with Toby sleeping at the foot of the bed.

A month later everything was complete. It was really beautiful; Starlit Rose stood in the shadows and looked out the door.

"I wish I could see everything," she said sadly.

"Hey, I have an idea," exclaimed Ed excitedly! "Hawk, come with me," he said as he hurried toward the bedroom.

The women wondered what they were up to. Then they laughed as they saw Ed and Hawk carrying Starlit Rose's full length mirror out of the bedroom and into the yard. The guys turned it to the lighthouse so she could see it and other things too.

"Oh," she exclaimed! "It's beautiful!"

Starlit Rose could see the lighthouse and the tower, all the way to the top. The house was white with blue shutters and a blue roof. The lighthouse going up to the tower and search light was painted with a red and white spiral just like a barber pole. On top it was painted blue as was the porch rail around the searchlight. The window shutters were blue too.

"I picked out the frogs at the birdie bath," said Rosebud tugging at Starlit Rose's dress. "Do you like them Star Rosie?"

"Oh yes Rosebud. I love them. They are so pretty sitting there in the flowers," answered Starlit Rose.

Rosebud giggled again with delight.

Looking out the back window she could see the duck pond and wild flowers.

"It's just breathtaking," Starlit Rose said happily. "I love everything."

"It was a lot of work," said Ed. "But worth every minute and so many helped out."

Hawk looking at his watch and seeing it was two o'clock in the morning said, "Well that brings us up to today."

"So you two haven't been back but just a couple months," questioned Susan?

"No," answered Starlit Rose, as she took Hawk's hand in both of hers.

Jack said, "Well I guess you never found out what rain meant and still you can't go outside."

Chapter 9

"Wait a minute," exclaimed Seal jumping up! "How did that spell go?

I cast this spell of magic dust on you, into the snow globe you will go, 'til love comes true and the rain will set you free," he finished deep in thought.

"Ok," he continued, "When the dust landed on you, you ended up in the globe. You and Hawk's love was so strong that when he found you the globe broke and you were here again."

"What are you getting at Seal," asked the Captain looking at him?

"Well," said Seal. "The only thing that was left with the spell was the rain. Starlit Rose can't go outside, but she was outside in the rain when we got here tonight. Outside, Rain, duh," he said now holding out his hands.

Everyone looked at him and then each other.

"That's right," exclaimed Susan. "You were outside in the rain. You were soaking wet."

Starlit Rose stood up, "I was," she said still stunned. "I was outside in the rain. Do you think the spell could be broken?"

"Could be," answered Seal. "After the sun comes up you should see if you can go outside. If you can then that means you're free and can go anywhere."

"That would be wonderful," Starlit Rose exclaimed, as she clapped her hands together!

"The Secret in the Lighthouse..." said Susan. "If only this lighthouse could talk; it could have told you where Starlit Rose was a long time ago."

"Well," said Captain Fisher as he stood up. "Now I know where your mind was the day I first met you Hawk. You were thinking about Starlit Rose."

"Yes, I missed her very much," answered Hawk. "I didn't know where she was or if I would ever see her again."

"Well I'm glad she is back and it all turned out ok," said the Captain as he and Susan headed up the stairs. "The sooner we get to bed the faster we will learn if Starlit Rose is free."

The rest of the crew said their good nights and followed them upstairs to their rooms.

As Starlit Rose lay down wrapped in Hawk's arms, her head on his shoulder, she said, "I hope Seal's right."

"We will know come daylight," replied Hawk as he shut his eyes and slipped off to sleep.

That morning as Hawk woke, the sun was just coming up and Starlit Rose was already dressed and headed out the door.

"Hey girl," he yelled. "Where are you going so early?"

Turning around she looked at him and grinned, "Outside," then she was gone.

"Hey wait for me." Grabbing his jeans and crutches he hurried after her.

Toby was barking with excitement as he too ran out the door.

"What's all the noise," asked the Fishers as they hurried down the stairs? Then they saw her, Starlit Rose out past Hawk. She was spinning around and around with her arms stretched out smiling. Her face was looking toward the warm sun and her eyes were shut.

"Hey look," yelled Seal as he looked out the window. "Star's outside!"

"Well would you look at that," exclaimed Billy looking out!

Owen grabbed his pants and headed for the stairs; then he about fell, trying to get then on. Ben and Jack ran past him and arrived downstairs first.

"Wait for me," yelled Seal as he too ran down the stairs!

John slid down the banister and met them at the bottom. They all stood outside quietly and watched Starlit Rose enjoying the early morning sun. What a site it was. The spell was broken. She was free at last.

A little later Ed and his family drove up. Getting out of the car, they watched in amazement. Going up to Hawk, Ed questioned, "The spell's broken?"

"Looks that way," answered Hawk. "She has been out here playing for the past hour."

"Wow," Ed exclaimed!

"I think it's wonderful," said Peaches still holding Rosebud as they watched.

About that time, Starlit Rose stopped and stood still. That's when she noticed everyone was watching her.

Rosebud started to wiggle, "Down mommy down," she said.

Peaches stood her little one on the ground and Rosebud ran to Starlit Rose. She grabbed her hand. "Come and see Star Rosie," she said as she started pulling on Starlit Rose's hand. "Come and see the little frogs and birdie bath."

Walking hand in hand, Rosebud showed her the little frogs and birdbath sitting in the middle of the flowers.

"It's so pretty, Rosebud."

Rosebud then looking up at Starlit Rose, smiled and said, "I picked them out."

"I'm glad you did," replied Starlit Rose; looking down at her. "It looks so beautiful here."

Starlit Rose could hear the birds singing and feel the cool breeze on her face. It was so wonderful to be outside and to be free. Finally the women returned inside and began to fix breakfast, Hawk fed the dog and the fishermen went to check on

their boat. The storm was over and the sea was calm. A few seagulls flew overhead and it was the beginning of a beautiful day. Starlit Rose was finally happy.

A little while later the guys came back and told Captain Fisher that the boat was fine. It had just collected some extra seaweed but they had cleaned it up and it was ready to go.

"Good," said the Captain. "After breakfast we shall be on our way."

Everyone had gathered around a big table, they enjoyed the good food, and the time they had with good friends, all was good and everyone had plenty to eat. After everyone had finished and the dishes were cleaned, Captain Fisher stood and said, "Well crew it's time to go. Come my Darlin' let us hope the fish are biting today," as he put his arm around Susan and led them all to the door. Turning to Hawk he said, "Hawk it was good to see you again, keep the little lady safe."

Susan hugged Starlit Rose and said, "I'm glad we had to stop here and be sure we will again our next trip."

With a wave of their hands, they went down the steps to the dock and headed out to sea.

Chapter 10

"So my Darlin' what would you like to do today," asked Hawk?

Without hesitation she replied, "We have to see mama."

When they arrived at the Finns, her father John met his daughter with open arms. "I'm sorry, I tried to stop her but you know your mother," he said as he hugged her.

"Don't worry about it Dad, it's in the past and I'm ok. Now I'm free," she said as she and her father walked into the house.

Going down the hall and into the bedroom John said, "Annabelle, guess who's here?"

Looking up from where she lay, Annabelle's eyes widened as she saw Starlit Rose standing there.

"Starlit, Starlit Rose, my baby," she exclaimed! "Is it really you?"

"Yes Mama," she said as she sat on the edge of the bed to hug her mother.

"Let me look at you," Annabelle said as she brushed some hair from Starlit Rose's face. "You are still just as beautiful as ever." Then she asked, "The spell?"

"It's broken mother, I'm free. We had a storm last night and a tree fell on Hawk. I ran out in the rain forgetting I couldn't go out and I got soaked," said Starlit Rose.

"The rain washed the dust off," Annabelle said. "I'm glad, I'm so glad you're home; I'm glad you are free and I'm so sorry for everything I caused." Then quizzically she asked, "What did you say about Hawk and a tree?"

"I'm fine Mother Annabelle," answered Hawk standing in the door.

"You're hurt," she exclaimed seeing him on crutches!

"It's just a broken leg but luckily Captain or should I say Dr. Fisher was there to fix it," replied Hawk.

"Well come on in and grab a seat, I have a story to tell," Annabelle said. "Johnny you must hear this too."

"It started a long time ago, when I was a little girl. My parents were very poor. We barely had enough to eat. My clothes were my older sisters hand me downs or scraps of cloth sewn together. I was the youngest child so there wasn't much left for me. The winters were so cold; we would bundle together just to keep warm. Mother and Father loved all of us and treated us with love and respect. We loved them too and we knew they tried. They were good parents and took good care of us. We all had to help each other."

"When I got older, I found work in the café as a waitress after school. I met Johnny after I graduated. We lived in a small town and Johnny came into the café for coffee and a sandwich. He was just passing through. We ended up talking and he decided to stay around awhile."

"I really liked him but he was poor just like we were. He had a car and rented a little shack in the back of the woods. He had just a few personal belongings. He hunted for food and got water from a nearby spring. He cooked food over an open fire and had a tree stump for a table. I told myself I would never live like that again. I wanted more. I

loved him so much; I thought I couldn't live without him. He was so good to me. He really loved me, but what I didn't tell you was Ed's mother was my best friend. We grew up together. While I was seeing Johnny she also had met a man. He too came into the café when he was on his way home. He lived in a big house in the city and was the owner of a few stores. His name was Joe Quail and he had a lot of money."

"Emma went on to marry him while I married the poor man who lived in the woods. We wrote each other for a while and then the letters stopped. Johnny and I could barely get by. We stayed in my hometown and Emma lived in the city."

"One day we took a trip to see what else was out there. We had saved some money a little at a time. By that time you were eight," she said to Starlit Rose. "I had vowed by then I was never going to let you marry a poor man. I didn't want you to grow up like I did. I wanted the best for you. Nice clothes and jewelry. I wanted you to have a nice warm home and good food to eat. I wanted you to marry someone who could provide for you, give you a good life," then she patted Starlit Rose's hand and got a drink of water.

"Well on our trip we came to this place, Lighthouse Villa, the people were friendly and nice. We loved it here and decided to stay. I found work in the clothing store and Johnny worked as a carpenter. That's when we started making money and living good. We could then buy you all the nice things we never had. We even bought this nice house. We moved to town on Friday and you met Hawk on Sunday at the lighthouse. Hawk looked out for you and kept you safe. You two did everything together. Hawks parents weren't poor but they weren't rich, I know that shouldn't have mattered but by then I thought he wasn't good enough. He was a good playmate but when you were older I worried. I saw you two were getting closer. I had to stop it. I couldn't let you marry a man that couldn't provide the finer things in life. When the Quails moved to town; Emma and I were together again. It was so good to have my friend back. When I learned she had a son about your age, I guess that's when I lost my mind. I was going to make sure you married him. He had lots of money and you would have everything. The more I interfered with your life the more irritable I became with everyone."

"That day when I saw you kissing and knew you married him, however sneakily you did it, I had enough. I was so angry. Before I knew what I was doing I had put you into that awful snow globe I had just bought. I couldn't undo what I had done;

only Hawk could. Deep down I knew he was your true love but if I gave him the globe it would break and you would be free. I was angry and so selfish. I didn't want him to be with you and I thought at that time he didn't have anything to give you."

"Now I have no grandchildren. I have lost everything that I had worked so hard for." Tears began to stream down her cheeks. "I'm so sorry for all the trouble I have caused."

"Don't cry Momma," said Starlit Rose gently. "I still love you, but you should have told us how you felt long ago instead of getting angry. Look how things turned out. Hawk ended up with a good job and now we have the lighthouse all because of you. Now I have a man and a beautiful home. I have pretty dresses and fine jewelry. I have you and daddy and my best friends. I have everything you wanted for me, plus I have the man I wanted. I couldn't ask for anything more."

"I'm glad for you Starlit Rose. I just wish I knew then, what I know now. You were right though. Hawk was the right man for you. He is a good man."

"Honey, I'm tired now I need to rest," Annabelle said.

Getting up, Hawk said as he kissed Annabelle's forehead, "Thank you for sharing your story with us. But tell me one thing before we go. Where did you hide the globe?"

"I had it in a lockbox, in my bag that I carried around. After you left I put it in the lighthouse," Annabelle answered sadly.

"I see," Hawk replied, "Get some rest now."

Starlit Rose hugged her mother and kissed her cheek, then before turning to walk back down the hall she whispered, "You never know what the future holds granny," then she smiled.

Johnny Finn sat down on the side of the bed and taking his wife's hand said, "I still love you, I'm glad you told them that story so now maybe they can understand you better. I'm also glad our baby is back and free. Thank you for telling Hawk where to find her. Those two love each other. They belong together and they deserve many years of happiness."

"I wish them well," she said. "I feel better now knowing I've righted a wrong. I can't change the past; all I can do now is wish them well. I'm glad I have my friends and family back."

Kissing his wife, Johnny stood up and quietly left the room. Annabelle closed her eyes and went to sleep.

In the living room, Hawk said, "I wish Mom could have told us about this long ago. We could have worked things out. We were just kids, yes we were in love but she didn't give us a chance to grow up. She never asked us what we wanted in life or helped us in anyway. Her telling us could have made all the difference. Maybe we wouldn't have married as soon as we did. We may have understood, but instead she stopped life even before it really started. It's all so sad."

"Mama was wrong in what she did," said Starlit Rose, "But if I can forgive her, then everyone else should too. After all it was my life that was lost."

Johnny put his arm around his daughter, "Let's think about what Annabelle said. How she felt and what she has been through. She has come a long way in the past three years. I think she has learned a lot, let's try to remember the good times."

Leaving for home they left Johnny alone with his wife. "To the good times," he whispered as he went to bed. Kissing Annabelle's cheek he lay down beside her, and holding her close, he went to sleep

and dreamed of the old days when they were young.

Chapter 11

"Starlit Rose," yelled Hawk a couple weeks later.

"Yes Hawk," she answered as she went to the door.

Hawk was sitting on the porch swing and Toby was lying on a rug by the door.

"What are you doing," he asked?

"Putting away the last of the breakfast dishes," she answered.

"How about you and I visit the duck pond? We could take some cola and watch the ducks for a while. We can sit under our favorite tree on the nice bench Ed and I put there. Then later we could come back to the lighthouse and watch the boats come and go. We can visit both of our favorite spots today."

"Sounds like fun," she exclaimed with a smile! "Give me a minute I'll be right back." As she was removing her apron she asked, "What about your leg?"

"My leg's fine. Besides right now I have four legs," he grinned holding up his crutches.

She hurried into the house and a moment later she was back and ready to go.

"Come Toby," Hawk said, "Let's go."

Walking side by side the three of them went to the duck pond, as they were walking they saw a lot of wildflowers and butterflies. Everything looked so pretty and colorful.

"Oh look," whispered Starlit Rose excitedly as she saw two rabbits running and chasing each other through the tall grass. Just then another rabbit poked his head out of a hole in the ground; they stood and watched for a bit before moving on. At the pond they saw several ducks and cattails. There were even some tall grasses there; and more flowers and butterflies. The little dock with the row boat really set the place off.

Sitting under the big beautiful shade tree on the bench that Ed and Hawk built, they finished drinking their colas. Holding each other close they enjoyed watching the ducks play.

Toby decided to take a swim and with it being a warm sunny day he enjoyed the cool water. He had

a lot of fun teasing the ducks. They were used to him so they weren't afraid as he was always there. As Hawk and Starlit Rose watched them, they quietly talked. After a while, Hawk touched her face and said, "I love you so much." He then held her in his arms and gently kissed her. About an hour later Hawk asked, "Think we should go?"

Reaching the lighthouse they sat on another lovely bench and watched the boats come in and others head back out to sea. Hawk spotted a familiar fishing boat coming in.

"Captain Fisher," he exclaimed with excitement, jumping up so quick, he almost fell!

"Where," Starlit Rose asked?

"Over there," he pointed out across the water. "Isn't that his fishing boat?"

They watched for a while as the boat got closer. Then Toby stood and started barking. He too had been watching the boat.

"It is; it's his boat, and it is coming this way," exclaimed Hawk so excitedly he almost fell again! "Come on; let's go down to the dock. We can meet them at the top of the stone steps when they come

up." They hurried as fast as they could; Toby ran along in front of them.

When Captain Fisher and his crew left the boat and was making the climb up the stairs, Hawk yelled, "Welcome back Captain," as he waved to the Captain and the crew.

Starlit Rose and Hawk were excited to see Captain Charles Fisher and the crew; they all went back to the house for coffee and food.

Drinking his coffee Captain Charles Fisher said, " Well kids I have some news to tell you. In a couple days the Mayor is going to award Toby the Medal of Honor for his quick action in turning on the searchlight and fog horn the night of the big storm."

"Toby a medal," exclaimed Starlit Rose?

"My dog," asked Hawk, "My dog?"

"Sure why not," said Susan with a grin. "He did save us from crashing, did he not?"

"Well, yes but..." began Hawk.

"Well nothing," put in Seal, "He deserves it."

"Why would the Mayor..." Starlit Rose started to ask?

"It was in all the papers," answered Billy.

"Yeah but..." Hawk began again.

"Charles wrote to him," said Susan with a smile as she placed her hand on her husband's arm.

"You have a smart dog," added Captain Fisher. "I thought a party in his honor would be nice."

"This is Monday," said Susan. "The party is set for three o'clock Thursday."

"Three days," exclaimed Starlit Rose! "That doesn't give us much time to get ready."

"It will be Ok," laughed Susan as she patted Starlit Rose's hand.

After lunch had been served and finished they started planning for the party. Sending out notices to everyone, they wanted to be sure that all from the Lighthouse Villa were invited. After the ceremony it was decided to have pot luck. They were going to have one big party to celebrate Toby their hero, the return of Starlit Rose and life coming back to the villa.

THE END

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Had many jobs in his life. Truck driver, steakhouse dishwasher and carpenter but recently found his passion in writing.

Join with him in an adventure of Excitement, Heartbreak and enjoyment of life.

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